

REMARKS

In the final Office action dated August 27, 2003, claims 1, 2, 4, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. With regard to the rejection of claim 1 under § 112, the Examiner states that "The claim defines at least two extension components wherein each of which sealingly engage with one of the four apertures. It appears from the disclosure that one extension component is designed to sealingly engage with a corresponding aperture." In the paper filed by the Applicants on May 30, 2003, claim 1 was amended to recite "a plurality of extension components each of which including a portion configured to sealingly engage with a corresponding aperture." As such, claim 1 recites language commensurate with the very language which the Examiner employs in the outstanding final action to reject claim 1 under § 112. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 does indeed satisfy the requirements of § 112.

Turning now to the § 112 rejection of claim 2, in the outstanding Office action, the Examiner states that there is no structural nexus between the recited catheter and the main component and that the catheter "fails to set forth any structure for receiving the main component." However, it is respectfully submitted that claim 2 does indeed provide the required structural nexus as it recites "the main catheter being sized to releasably receive and deliver the main components within vasculature." To wit, it is the structure of the catheter itself which receives the main component. Moreover, concerning the rejection of claim 4 under § 112, the Office action states that "there is nexus integrating the releasing structure and the main delivery catheter." To the extent that the rejection of claim 4 is based upon there being no nexus integrating the releasing structure and the main delivery catheter, it is nevertheless respectfully submitted that claim 4 is not indefinite. On page 22, line 10 et seq., delivery catheter 506 is described as being "equipped with structure or means, such as a pusher device to accomplish

relative movement of the catheter and limb extensions 452 and to release the same at the target site." As it is proper to claim more broadly than any particular embodiment described in a specification, it is believed that it is not necessary to limit claim 4 to recite a pusher device and thus, it is submitted that claim 4 is clearly supported by the present application and is definite. As to the rejection of claim 14 under § 112, it is respectfully submitted that further limiting claim 14 to require that the extension components be hollow would unnecessarily limit the claim and that the recitation of "the inside" does not render the claim indefinite. That is, an item need not be hollow to have an inside. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that each of the examined claims satisfy the requirements of § 112.

In the August final Office action, claims 1-5, 16 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Wisselink (5,984,955). In so rejecting the claims, the Examiner stated that Wisselink discloses a system for grafting branch vessels including a main component having at least four apertures and at least two extensions configured to sealingly engage with the corresponding aperture. No recognition was made of the recitation in claim 1 of "at least one of the plurality of extension components including a first end portion, a second end portion and a midsection portion and a support structure attached to the midsection portion." Claims 7, 9-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wisselink as applied to claim 1 above and further in view of Piplani et al. (5,489,295). It is respectfully submitted, however, that neither of the cited references either alone or in combination, recite the subject matter recited in the pending claims. Significantly, Wisselink does not teach or disclose a system for treating vasculature including a main component in combination with the plurality of extension components, at least one of the plurality of extension components including a first end portion, a second end portion and a midsection portion and a support structure attached to the

midsection portion. On the contrary, Wisselink merely teaches anchoring devices for accomplishing desired anchoring of primary and branch grafts. That is, there is no teaching or disclosure in Wisselink of a support structure attached to a midsection portion of an extension component. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that each of examined claims 1-5, 7, 9-14, 16 and 27 define allowable subject matter.

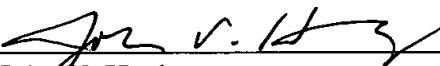
It is also respectfully requested that the finality of the August 27, 2003 Office action be withdrawn. The basis for this request is that the recitation of "at least one of the plurality of extension components including a first end portion, a second end portion and a midsection portion and a support structure attached to the midsection portion" appears to have not been considered in the August 2003 Office action.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has attempted to respond to each and every rejection set forth in the outstanding Office Action. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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